Learning the letters and imitating their sounds (above) are the primary goals of the Huggable program. But words come naturally, too, as the children pick a familiar combination (right) to help show off their spelling know-how.

A bright new way to learn letters

The Huggables

Plastic, inflatable and not quite child-size, the Huggables are what kindergarteners refer to as "the letter people." They are the practically irresistible principal ingredients of a reading readiness program called Alpha Time. The Huggables were created by New Dimensions in Education and follow the success of Alpha One, a reading program for first-graders NDE developed two years ago. They have aroused much interest among educators. By next year more than 4,000 classrooms, like this one in Wyandanch, N.Y.'s Taukomas School, will have the $395 letter people program. Each of the 26 figures boldly exhibits the letter which is not only its name but also the key to some identifying characteristic: Mr. F, for example, has immense Funny Feet while Mr. H has Horrible green Hair. (The vowels are all female characters, it turns out, and the consonants are all males.) The program also includes books and songs about each Huggable stressing the specific letter and its sound. "The outstanding feature of this program is its ability to motivate," says Taukomas School Principal Richard Voso. "I've yet to see a child who's been turned off by it."

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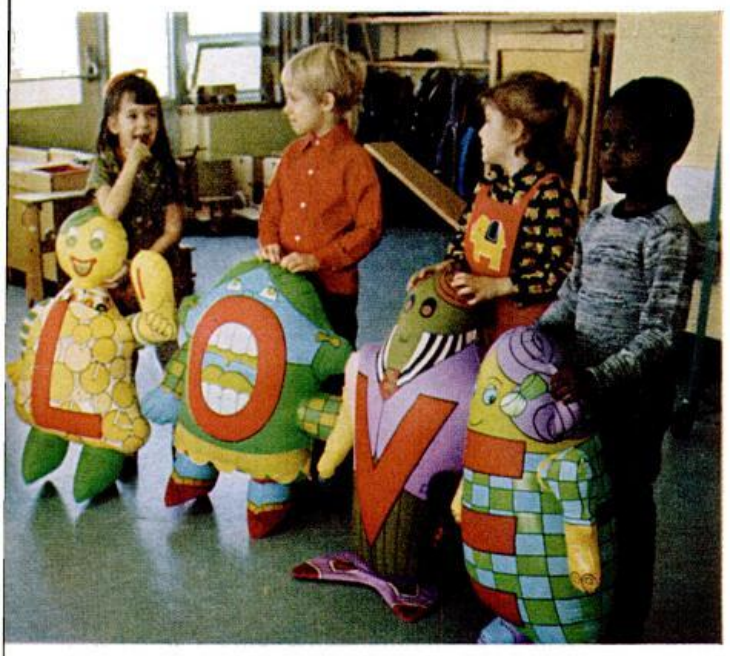

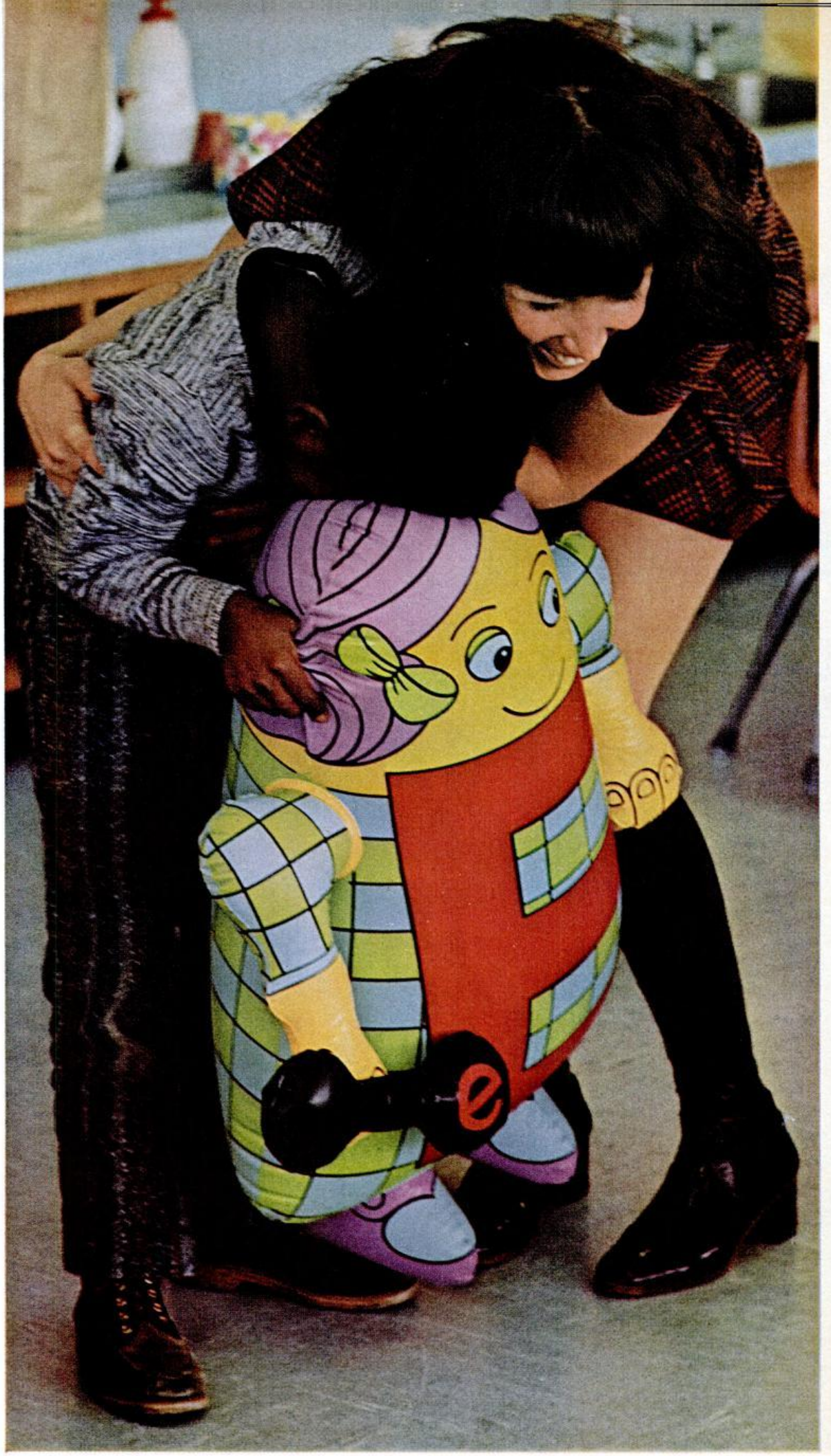

The classroom conversation turned to "love" and as the Huggables spelled out the word (top), the letter bearers swapped ideas about what it meant: kisses and squeezes were mentioned. But Craig, standing behind Miss E, didn't contribute. "I don't have a girl friend, so I don't know what love means," he explained. When his teacher, Wendy Meehan, applied for the job (above), Craig found a new use for his Huggable (right)—a perfect hiding place for a very embarrassed face.

An exercise in spelling becomes a lesson about love

CONTINUED

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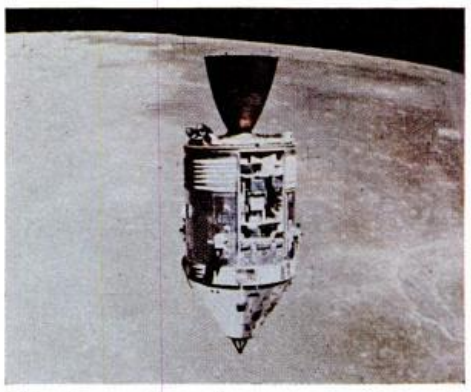
Being plush isn't enough. I think a car should also be tough. That's why I like the Chrysler New Yorker.

—ARTHUR GODFREY

If you've ever ridden in a Chrysler New Yorker Brougham, you know what I mean when I say it's plush. But just as important is the way this car is built. I've seen Chrysler build their cars, I think they're really trying to put together a car that will work better and last longer than any they've ever built before. That's important.



Here's another famous way to get around. Apollo 15. I wanted you to see it because it has to be strong. The structure of the command module is welded into a single unit. Chrysler welds their car bodies into a single unit for the same reason. Strength. In fact, Chryslers are welded in places where other cars are bolted together. The Chrysler engineers believe this makes for a strong car. And I think we all deserve cars that are as strong as possible.

This is what the inside of the New Yorker Brougham looks like. The seats have a beautiful fabric with a Jacquard weave. But more important, that fabric is built to look good through years of use. Everything that goes into this car has to be two things. It has to be high quality. And it has to be built to last.

You can tell a lot about the New Yorker just from looking at it. It's big. It's comfortable. And I think it's good looking. It's also a very quiet car. That's one of the things you can't see. It has rubber body cushions that help isolate the noise and vibration of the road, helping to keep it out of the interior of the car.

Try a New Yorker. I think it'll spoil you for any other kind of car. It's plush, and it's built to last. That's where Chrysler got their slogan for this year.

Coming through with the kind of car America wants.

CHRYSLER

CHRYSLER
Plymouth

In a display of alphabetical enthusiasm, the children join ranks on the school lawn and, using all 26 Huggables (and more), spell the traditional typing exercise.

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